



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Safety Experts Recommend Using Car Seats on Airplanes

Safe Kids Kansas offers air travel safety tips

Infants and toddlers on airplanes are safest in a car seat with a harness, in case of turbulence. “A child who rides in a car seat on the ground should ride in that car seat on a plane,” says Jan Stegelman, Safe Kids Kansas coordinator. “Air turbulence can be dangerous and can appear suddenly without warning.”

Not all car seats can fit on standard airplane seats, which are typically about 16 inches wide, but Safe Kids Kansas and the Federal Aviation Administration strongly recommend using a car seat if it fits. As in cars, babies under a year old and 20 pounds are best restrained in a rear-facing car seat, and a forward-facing car seat can protect toddlers up to 40 pounds or more. Make sure your child’s car seat is labeled “certified for use in motor vehicles and aircraft.”

“You need your child’s car seat to travel to and from the airport anyway,” says Stegelman. “Car rental companies might not have reliable car seats available. Your kids are better off in their own car seats.”

Children who have outgrown car seats should sit directly on the airplane seat and, like all passengers, keep the lap belt buckled across their thighs or hips. Booster seats are not allowed on airplanes, because they require shoulder belts and airplane seats have only lap belts.

The FAA advises travelers with small children to reserve a pair of seats by a window. Car seats are not allowed in aisle seats or exit rows, where they could block emergency escape routes; they must be installed at a window seat. Most airlines offer a significant discount for children under 2.

Adult air travelers should buckle up, too. “You’re a role model,” says Stegelman. “Children learn safety behavior by watching parents and caregivers.” Safe Kids Worldwide released a study in 2005 showing a strong correlation between adult safety habits and children’s safety behavior.

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Also, says Stegelman, “Children who ride in car seats on the ground appear to be more comfortable and better behaved when using one on a plane.”

For more information about aircraft child passenger safety, visit the “Flying With Children” page at www.faa.gov/passengers. For information about car seats and child passenger safety in general, visit www.usa.safekids.org.

Safe Kids Kansas, Inc. is a nonprofit Coalition of 67 statewide organizations and businesses dedicated to preventing accidental injuries to Kansas children ages 0-14. Local coalitions and chapters are located in Allen, Anderson, Atchison, Clay, Dickinson, Doniphan, Douglas, Ellis, Ford, Franklin, Geary, Jackson, Jefferson, Johnson, Leavenworth, Marion, Meade, Mitchell, Montgomery, Nemaha, Osage, Pottawatomie, Republic, Rice, Riley, Saline, Smith, Shawnee, Wabaunsee, Wilson and Woodson Counties, as well as the cities of Chanute, Emporia, Leavenworth, Norton, Pittsburg, the Wichita Area and the Metro Kansas City Area. Safe Kids Kansas a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations whose mission is to prevent accidental childhood injury.

www.kansassafekids.org

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